
New Hampshire
*Department of Agriculture,
Markets & Food*

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Spring Brings New Activity on the Farm

Spring has finally arrived and with it, another New Hampshire growing season gets underway. Tractors in the fields, freshly turned earth, and daffodils blooming are sure signs spring is here. Spring on the farm brings a flurry of activity mostly centered round getting crops established in a timely way to take advantage of our relatively short growing season. Frost-free days usually begin around Memorial Day and end sometime in September. That leaves a window of about three months for crops to grow and mature to harvest.

Spring agricultural activities include planting early vegetable crops like corn and other cold tolerant species. Spring is the best time for planting new apple trees, berry and other fruit plants and growers are busy now expanding or renewing their orchards. Livestock and dairy farmers are also planting corn and new grass and other forage crops for hay and silage feed.

It's only May, but this is prime time for many greenhouses and nurseries with a variety of flowers, plants, shrubs and trees for home landscape plantings and vegetable transplants for launching home gardens. Mother's Day traditionally kicks off the plant selling season for this industry.

Farmers markets, too, have started for the season in some communities, offering flowers and plants and early vegetable crops like asparagus, as well as eggs, maple, baked goods and more. There are 51 New Hampshire markets to visit this year!

If you need help finding New Hampshire products and garden needs this spring, there are several resources available for you to use. Visit the NH Dept. of Agriculture, Markets & Food website at www.agriculture.nh.gov and click on publications to find a list of directories including farm stands, harvest your own farms, farmers markets, greenhouses and nurseries and more.

If you need help with growing your own garden and landscape, visit the UNH Cooperative Extension Family, Home & Garden Center at <http://www.ceinfo.unh.edu/FHGEC/FHGEC.htm>. You can also call with specific production questions toll free at 1-877-398-4769.

For more information, contact Gail McWilliam Jellie, Division of Agricultural Development, email gmcwilliam@agr.state.nh.us.

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